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United States Senate

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November 18, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for reaching out in support of the prescription drug pricing reforms that are currently being considered as a part of the President's Build Back Better agenda.

In several tele-town halls with Arizona seniors during the pandemic, one concern I heard over and over again: seniors pay too much for prescriptions. As you rightly note, and as I have said consistently, Congress should be focused on finding solutions that ensure seniors pay the lowest cost possible for prescription drugs.

As some of you may know, I worked closely with the White House, Senate and House leadership, and my colleagues to negotiate the prescription drug language currently included in the House budget reconciliation bill.

In negotiating how this legislation could lower prescription costs, my approach was shaped by Arizona input and values -- and I had two primary goals: ensuring seniors see real savings and pay the lowest cost possible, and protecting innovation to avoid stifling new medicines.

The agreement we reached effectively addresses the lack of competition in the pharmaceutical marketplace. These are real market failures that cost Arizonans money and, as your letter mentioned, often lead those on fixed incomes to either delay or ration their medications.

Our agreement represents a smarter way to lower drug costs compared to earlier plans based on government price-setting for nearly every drug, which could have stifled medical innovation and reduced the development of new cures by ten percent according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. Our proposal also keeps drugs affordable for Medicare beneficiaries and others into the future by ensuring drug prices cannot rise faster than inflation.

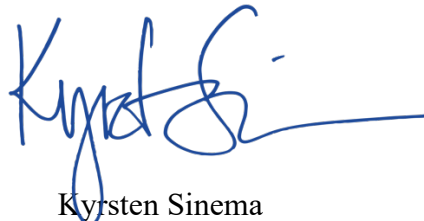
In addition to allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices, I successfully worked to include provisions to maximize real savings for seniors in other ways. Our new agreement improves upon the existing framework to cap seniors' out-of-pocket costs on prescription drugs to \$2,000 annually, with smoothing provisions to help Medicare beneficiaries spread their out-of-pocket costs evenly throughout the year. One of the changes I was able to secure in the new agreement was language to assist with other costs seniors face in Medicare Part D, and cap monthly insulin costs at \$35 for seniors and others living with diabetes.

As I promised Arizonans, I am working hard to ensure prescription drugs are available at the lowest cost possible, and I look forward to continuing that work with strong partners in the state like yourselves. Thank you for reaching out and for voicing your strong support for prescription drug reforms as a part of the President's Build Back Better agenda.

Continued negotiations and votes on that agenda -- as well as other urgent end-of-year business such as the annual defense bill, federal appropriations, and the nation's debt limit -- may keep me working in the Senate for much of the rest of this calendar year. I do look forward to meeting in-person when time allows to discuss this and other issues impacting Arizona, and in the meantime, would be happy to connect via phone if helpful.

I look forward to continuing our discussions and our work together on behalf of the Arizonans we serve.

Sincerely,



Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator

cc:

Cesar N. Chavez (State Representative, LD XXIX)
Lorenzo Sierra (State Representative, LD XIX)
Alma Hernandez (State Representative, LD III)
Rebecca Rios (State Senator, LD XXVII)
Jennifer Jermaine (State Representative, LD XVIII)
Christine Marsh (State Senator, LD XXVIII)
Lisa Otondo (State Senator, LD IV)
Judy Schwiebert (State Representative, LD XX)
Jennifer Pawlick (State Representative, LD XVII)
Ben Toma (State Representative, LD XXII)
Jennifer Longdon (House Democratic Assistant Leader, LD XXIV)
Steve Kaiser (State Representative, LD XV)
Justin Willmeth (State Representative, LD XV)
T.J. Shope (State Senator, LD VIII)